



South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



MAHALO VETERANS, MAHALO



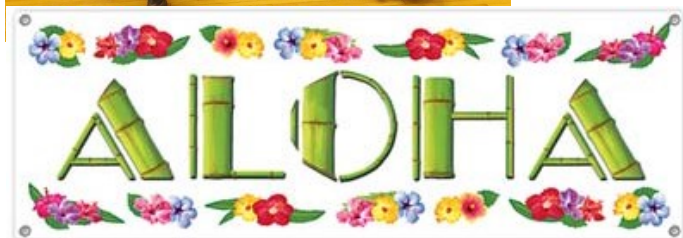
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Throughout the world, feasting has been and is a universal form of celebrating happy and important events.

There was no beach and no breeze, but staff at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice state Veterans Home adorned the auditorium with palm trees, flowers, parrots, grass skirting, and seashells to deliver a picturesque luau setting.



It was a day filled with hula dancing, game competitions and sampling the exotic island flavors!!!!!!

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

If you have a disability that is impacting your ability to obtain or keep a job, South Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) can help. A wide array of services is available through the Divisions of Rehabilitation Services and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired to help veterans to address disability related barriers to employment.

Trained staff are available to assist with services that result in you reaching your employment goals. If you already receive VR services from the Veterans Administration, State VR will work in conjunction with the VA to ensure that you get the full array of services.

Once you apply and are determined eligible, a Vocational Rehabilitation counselor will work with you on an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Your plan will list the services to assist you to achieve your employment goal.

All services are designed to lead to your employment goal and are tailored to your unique needs. Here's a short list of some of the services that are provided most often:

- Vocational rehabilitation counseling
- Employment skills training
- Placement in a job and supports to be successful on the job
- Assistive technology and other work accommodations

To apply, simply contact an office near you and ask to apply for VR services.

Aberdeen: 605.626.2398

Brookings: 605.688.4280

Chamberlain: 605.734.4555

Huron: 605.353.7130

Mitchell: 605.995.8072

Pierre: 605.773.3318

Rapid City: 605.394.2261

Sioux Falls: 605.367.5330

Spearfish: 605.642.6817

Watertown: 605.882.5150

Yankton: 605.668.3050

For more information go to: <http://dhs.sd.gov/drs/>



ICVCSF CONFERENCE

The annual Improving Combat Veterans Care/Supporting Families conferences will be held in Aberdeen and Yankton/

These conferences are intended to assist health care providers and other professionals as they support families of veterans and service members in South Dakota and northern Nebraska.

Aberdeen – April 23, 2015

Yankton – April 24, 2015

Watch for more information about the conferences soon.

SFVAHC TO HOST TOWN HALL IN WATERTOWN

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Dakotas VA Regional Office and Sioux Falls VA Health Care System are hosting a town hall for veterans, family members, veterans service organization representatives, and the public to provide feedback and recommendations about VA operations and VA programs.

The "town hall" will be held Thursday, March 12, 2015, at 5:00 p.m., at the Watertown Readiness Center (1915 N. Hwy. 20).

The Town Halls are a great opportunity for VA leadership to hear feedback, thoughts, and concerns from the veterans, as well as to answer questions about VA benefit and VA health care, and to share information.

New for this town hall, is a benefits clinic from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. During this benefits clinic, VA representatives will be available to receive claims for compensation benefits. The VA will have secure electronic access to benefit records and can answer questions about compensation claims.

In addition, the VA business office staff will also be present to answer questions about VA eligibility, non-VA Care, and the Veterans' Choice Act.



SDDVA STAFF CHANGES

Crista Pick, state veterans service officer in the Sioux Falls Claims Office, has accepted another position with the state of South Dakota. Crista will serve as the Human Service Program Specialist with Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Please join us in thanking Crista for all that she has done for our veterans. We wish Crista the very best in her new adventure!

Claims Examiner Jerry Lemme, has accepted the open VSO position. His first day in this position will be March 9th.

Matt Steffen will be serving as the veterans service officer at the Michael J Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home. Steffen's replaces Ralph Sowder who had discovered that fishing might be a great thing to do during his retirement. We wish Ralph the very best in his retirement endeavor and appreciate the assistance he has given our veterans.

Please join us in welcoming Matt to our team of experts assisting veterans.





**“WELCOME HOME
VIETNAM
VETERANS”**

**TO
THE 3RD ANNUAL
WELCOME HOME
EVENT**

**SATURDAY,
MARCH**

28, 2015

**TIME: 1 PM, POST
22**

**AMERICAN
LEGION,
818 E. ST PATRICK
ST.**

**“ALL VETERANS
AND FAMILIES
ARE WELCOME”**



WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS CELEBRATION

On March 27-30, 2015, South Dakotans will come together to pay tribute and honor the 27,000 young men and women from our state who served during the Vietnam War and those who gave their lives.

With the founding principles that "Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another," leadership from South Dakota's Vietnam Veterans of America chapters envisioned a statewide celebration similar to the 2006 dedication of the South Dakota Vietnam Veteran Memorial.

"Our Vietnam veterans fought for our freedoms, kept America safe and dedicated their lives to this nation. We are forever thankful for their unwavering strength and courage while fighting in the Vietnam War," said Roland Lambert, president of SD State Council of Vietnam Veterans of America. "These celebrations will afford us an opportunity to join together to express our gratitude, remember their service and say 'welcome home.'"

Although numerous communities are hosting events throughout March 27-30, Pierre has been the site selected by the State Council of Vietnam Veterans of America for their two-day salute to Vietnam Veterans. Festivities will begin on Saturday afternoon, March 28, at 1 p.m. Maynard Kaderlik, Regional Agent Orange representative, will conduct an

Town Hall at the Pierre American Legion Post 8 Cabin (520 Pierre St.).

At 6 p.m. Pierre Post 8 will host a celebration dinner for Vietnam veterans and their families. Free will donations will be accepted. At 7 p.m. participants will have the opportunity to partake in a pre-screening of "Last Days of Vietnam," a PBS American Experience Production.

On Sunday, March 29, Vietnam veterans are encouraged to attend a "Welcome Home Breakfast" at McClellands Restaurant in Fort Pierre (902 Walleye Drive). Breakfast will be served from 7 a.m. – 10 a.m. At noon, participants will begin lining up for the "Celebration Run." This parade, which starts at 1 p.m. will travel from McClellands in Fort Pierre to the Vietnam Memorial at Capitol Lake in Pierre. For more information on the parade, contact Tony Rae (605-224-5157).

The Remembrance Ceremony to honor our heroes will start at 1:30 pm at Capitol Lake. Special guest speakers include S.D. Gov. Dennis Daugaard and Larry Zimmerman, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs.

Immediately following the ceremony, Pierre American Legion Post 8 will host a free-will donation celebration reception from 2:30 p.m. – 5 p.m.

"These heroes served honorably and bravely in Vietnam," said Larry Zimmerman, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. "Unfortunately, they arrived home to a country in political turmoil, and never received the recognition they deserve. This 'Welcome Home Celebration' affords all of us an opportunity to show our unified gratitude for the service and the sacrifices that these veterans made on our behalf."

"This is a great opportunity for us to reach out to our brothers and sisters across this state in an effort to share a hand-shake or a smile and let each of them know that they are appreciated for what they've done in service to this state and our nation," said Roger Papka, SD VVA state chaplain.

Lambert is thankful that Vietnam Veterans in the Pierre area have taken the lead on this event. Support has been secured from the American Legion, the VFW, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America and the Military Order of the Purple Heart.



VETERAN TOWN HALL

March 20, 2015 at 2:00 pm

American Legion Post 8
520 S Pierre St
Pierre, SD 57501



You are Invited! Veterans, their families, and the community are invited to attend a listening session with representatives from VA Black Hills Health Care System. Bring your questions and thoughts about VA health care. We're here to listen.



**Black Hills
Health Care System**
Department of Veteran Affairs



Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century

DOD SALUTES SDNG FAMILY READINESS PROGRAM

The war on terrorism that began with the 9/11 attacks has meant that unprecedented numbers of reserve troops have been called to active duty. The Department of Defense, as it has done for the past 15 years, honored the top unit in each reserve component for its outstanding programs that support unit missions and family readiness, Feb. 27 at the Pentagon.

For the third consecutive year, a South Dakota Army National Guard unit was at the Pentagon's Reserve Family Readiness Awards ceremony to receive the award in the Army National Guard category as the Sioux Falls and Flan-dreau, S.D.-based 1742nd Transportation Company was named the 2014 award recipient.

Richard O. Wightman Jr., principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for reserve affairs, expressed the department's gratitude for family readiness support programs around the country that allow Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen and Guardsmen to serve around the world without having to worry about the challenges of life on the home front.

"To these unsung heroes, we owe much," Wightman said. "They have given their time, freely, without any guarantees of accolades or reimbursements, yet they sacrifice their evenings, weekends, and time with family in the selfless service of others."

Capt. Tyler Gerlach, commander of the 1742nd, Christine Krogman, Family Readiness Group leader, and Kristin Neuhardt, Family Readiness support assistant were on hand to receive the award, while Gen. Frank J. Grass, chief of National Guard Bureau and Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, SDNG adjutant general, were in attendance.

"It is truly an honor to receive a federal award at this level," said Gerlach. "It's a tribute to the strong values and sense of family that we have the pleasure to work with in the South Dakota Army National Guard. I think the award is a reassurance for a job well done and a sure sign that not only are our units operationally ready for any mission, but that our families carry on some of the same traits that make us not only successful at home but even more so as we are deployed."

Units recognized for outstanding efforts to build support networks for Guard and Reserve families are:

- The Army National Guard's 1742nd Transportation Company, Sioux Falls, South Dakota;
- The Army Reserve's 75th Legal Operations Detachment, Mountain View, California;
- The Marine Corps Reserve's 4th Combat Engineer Battalion, 4th Marine Division, Baltimore;
- The Navy Reserve's Navy Operation Support Center Charleston, North Charleston, South Carolina;
- The Air National Guard's 157th Air Refueling Wing, Pease, Air National Guard Base, New Hampshire;
- The Air Force Reserve's 934th Airlift Wing, Minneapolis; and
- The Coast Guard Reserve's Port Security Unit 312, San Francisco.



DOD SALUTES SDNG FAMILY READINESS PROGRAM (CONTINUED)

Retired Navy Vice Adm. Norbert R. Ryan Jr., president and CEO of the Military Officers Association of America, credited family readiness programs with making a huge difference in the lives of those deployed far from home.

"Service members are able to focus on their duties armed with the knowledge that a support structure back home will help care for their families," he said.

The MOAA donates \$1,000 to each of the seven honoree units' family programs.

Past winners include the SDNG's 235th Military Police Company, located in Rapid City and Sioux Falls, who received the award for 2013 and the 842nd Engineer Company, located in Spearfish, Belle Fourche and Sturgis, who received the 2012 award.



MJFSVH RUNS AWAY WITH 2ND PLACE

The Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home team, the "Flame Throwers," outdid themselves in securing 2nd place in the "Old Duffers" division at the "Nemo 500" Outhouse Race in Nemo last weekend.

In its ninth year, this fundraiser assists the NA-JA Shrine Kids Transportation Fund.

Other great contenders were from the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology and Ellsworth Air Force Base.



The MJFSVH team consisted of Supt. Brad Richardson, R.N. Ann Remington, Physical Therapist Keaton Cummings, Physical Plant Manager Tom Inman, and Electrician Bob Halls.

Upcoming Events

2015

March 12—SFVAHCS Town Hall Meeting—Watertown 1951 N. HWY 20—5:00 pm
Mar. 13—SFVAHCS Veterans & Employees Creative Arts show
Mar. 19—DOL Job Fair—Aberdeen Civic Arena—215 S. Washington Street—12:30 pm—5:00 pm
Mar. 20—VA Veterans Town Hall—American Legion Post 8—Pierre 2:0 pm
Mar. 25—DOL Brookings Job Fair—Days Inn—2500 E. 6th Street—Noon—5:30 pm
Mar. 26—DOL Yankton Job Fair—Technical Education Center—1200 W. 21st Street—2:00 pm—6:00 pm
Mar. 28-30 Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Celebrations
Mar. 29—Vietnam Veterans Welcome Home Program—Pierre—1:00 pm
Mar. 31—DOL Watertown Job Fair—County Fair Banquet Hall—14 2nd St SE—1:30 pm—5:30 pm
Apr. 6—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am
Apr. 15—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting (DAV—Sioux Falls) 10:00 am
Apr. 23—ICVCSF Conference—Aberdeen
Apr. 24—ISVCSF Conference—Yankton
May 5—SDDVA Mini Conference—Sturgis—10:00 am
May 6—SDDVA Mini Conference—Pierre—10:00 am
May 7—SDDVA Mini Conference—Brookings—10:00 am
Jun. 18-21—VFW State Convention—Yankton, SD
Jul. 6—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am
Aug. 5-9—AVIT Traveling Vietnam Wall Comes to Sioux Falls
Oct. 9—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am

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